

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3128

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 3177

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO, BR

SUBJ: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON PORTUGUESE SITUATION

REF: STATE 090174

1. FOR BACKGROUND, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BOWDLER MAY WISH TO CONSULT FOLLOWING EMBTELS THAT CONCERN BRAZILIAN-PORTUGUESE-AFRICAN RELATIONS: 4338, OCTOBER 31, 1972 AND 4832, NOVEMBER 28, 1972, DEALING WITH FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER GIBSON BARBOZA'S TRIP TO AFRICA; 8001, NOVEMBER 24, 1973, REPORTING THE VISIT TO BRAZIL OF IVORY COAST FOREIGN MINISTER USHER; 8042, NOVEMBER 27, 1973 REPORTING CONGRESSMAN DIGGS' VISIT TO BRAZIL; 523 AND 712, JANUARY 22 AND 30, 1974, REPORTING THE VISIT TO BRAZIL OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ARIKPO; AND 1966, MARCH 23, 1974, REPORTING PRESIDENT GEISEL'S SPEECH OF MARCH 19.

2. IN BRIEFING COMMITTEE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY BOWDLER MAY WISH TO USE LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH FOLLOWS IN DESCRIBING BRAZILIAN REACTION TO THE PORTUGUESE COUP: ALL OF BRAZIL, BOTH OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE, HAS BEEN WATCHING WITH FASCINATION THE EVOLUTION OF THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF SPINOLA'S BOOK PORTUGAL AND THE FUTURE, EXCERPTS OF WHICH WERE EXTENSIVELY PUBLISHED IN THE BRAZILIAN PRESS AND SALES OF WHICH  
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MADE IT AN IMMEDIATE BEST SELLER. WHEN THE COUP TOOK PLACE,

PORTUGUESE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUED TO BE THE SUBJECT OF VERY CLOSE ATTENTION BY BRAZILIAN POLICY MAKERS, AND DAY-TO-DAY DEVELOPMENTS DOMINATED THE BRAZILIAN PRESS.

3. FROM A FOREIGN POLICY POINT OF VIEW, THE FIRST REACTION WAS THAT A LONGSTANDING DILEMMA OF BRAZILIAN FOREIGN POLICY WAS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING RESOLVED BY THE COUP. BRAZIL HAS BEEN UNCOMFORTABLE FOR SOMETIME WITH PORTUGUESE STANDPATTISM IN AFRICA WHICH GIVEN THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, WAS BEGINNING TO BE COSTLY WITH REGARD TO BRAZILIAN INTERESTS IN BLACK AFRICA AND WITH THE LDC'S AMONG WHOM BRAZIL HAS AN IMPORTANT POSITION AND WIELDS CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE. WITH THE ADVENT OF THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND ITS IMPLIED INTENTION TO PROCEED TO AT LEAST A LIBERATLIZATION OF POLICY WITH REGARD TO THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES, BRAZIL WAS BELIEVED TO SEE THE EMERGENCE OF A POTENTIAL RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM BY PORTUGUESE MEANS. BRAZIL WAS IN FACT THE FIRST COUNTRY TO EXTEND RECOGNITION TO THE NEW PORTUGUESE REGIME.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT, WITH THE RETURN OF EXILED PORTUGUESE POLITICAL LEADERS, THE BRAZILIAN ATTITUDE HAS BECOME ONE OF CAUTION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE POSITION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IS THAT BRAZIL WILL ADOPT A WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE AND WILL NOT ASSUME ANY PUBLIC POSITIONS IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGUAL. WITH REGARD TO THE BRAZILIAN POSTURE TOWARD THE CHANGING STATUS AND FUTURE OF THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND A POSSIBLE USEFUL BRAZILIAN ROLE IN THE ASSOCIATED MATTER OF BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN PORTUGUAL AND THE COUNTRIES OF BLACK AFRICA, IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT BRAZIL WOULD NOT ASSUME AN INTERMEDIARY ROLE UNLESS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED TO BY ALL PARTIES.

5. THE FOLLOWING IS FYI ONLY:  
THE TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF MARIO SOARES, LEADER OF THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY, HAS SOBERED THE GOB, WHICH HAS VERY LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF SOARES. HIS ALLEGED PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY WOULD PARTICIPATE "IN MY GOVERNMENT" CAUSED SOME CONSTERNATION IN GOB GOVERNMENT CIRCLES, WHICH WAS INTENSIFIED BY THE RETURN TO PORTUGAL OF  
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THE EXILED COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER ALVARO CUNHAL, WHO REPORTEDLY WAS WELCOMED BY A CROWD PROMINENTLY DISPLAYING THE FLAG OF THE SOVIET UNION. ONE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, WHO HAD SERVED IN PORTUGAL, SPECULATED THAT THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY MAY, IN ORDER TO PROTECT ITS OWN INTEREST, BE FORCED TO INSTALL AN AUTHORITARIAN REGIME AS WAS DONE IN BRAZIL IN 1964. A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE AFRICA DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PRIVATELY EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT OVER POST-COUP EVENTS IN PORTUGAL, AND,

AFTER NOTING THAT "SPINOLA IS NOT IN CHARGE," DESCRIBED THE RETURN OF LEFTIST LEADERS AS "SCARY." THERE HAS ALREADY BEEN SOME APPREHENSION EXPRESSED IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES HERE, AND PARTICULARLY AMONG THE BRAZILIAN MILITARY, THAT, IF THE GOP CONTINUES TO MOVE LEFTWARD, IT COULD BECOME POLITICALLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE PREVAILING BRAZILIAN REGIME. CERTAINLY, THE KNOWN ATTITUDES OF MEN LIKE SOARES, CUNHAL AND EVEN FRANCISCO SA CARNEIRO, WHO HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS A STRONG POSSIBILITY FOR PRIME MINISTER IN A PORTUGUESE CARETAKER GOVERNMENT, WOULD BE ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN AND PRO-CIVIL LIBERTARIAN. IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT A LEFT-LEANING GOP WOULD REQUIRE DELICATE HANDLING ON THE PART OF THE GOB.

6. CONGRESSMAN DIGGS WAS PERSONALLY EXPOSED TO CURRENT THINKING WITHIN THE BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY IN THE COURSE OF INTERVIEWS WITH MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AFRICAN DEPARTMENT AND WITH FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER GIBSON BARBOZA ON NOVEMBER 19, 1973. THE CONGRESSMAN IS AWARE THAT THE PREVIOUS FOREIGN MINISTER WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE U.S. WOULD REDOUBLE ITS PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL TO LIBERALIZE ITS POLICY TOWARD THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES IN ORDER TO AVOID BRAZIL'S HAVING TO ASSUME A FRONTRUNNING POSITION. THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THIS CAUTIOUS APPROACH WOULD STILL PREVAIL.  
END FYI.  
CRIMMINS

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